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MAY 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Office of Planning, Programming and Budgeting

SUBJECT: U-2R Aircraft Accomplishments and Capabilities

1. In accordance with your request for the subject information, we have prepared an outline of the milestones reached to date in the U-2R. In addition, we have included some of the more important comparative performance factors of the new aircraft as an attachment. In the event that you require further information on the U-2R, the Office of Special Activities is available to brief you at any time you so desire.

2. The first of 12 U-2R aircraft was accepted by the Agency from the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation (LAC) on 28 September 1967, the last aircraft was accepted on 11 January 1969. Six of the 12 aircraft are Agency assets with the remainder being processed by the Agency for the Strategic Air Command, USAF.

3. In January 1969 the U-2R was declared Operationally Ready. During January and February 1969 two aircraft were deployed to the Agency Detachment at [REDACTED] Since arrival at [REDACTED] the U-2R aircraft has flown two operational missions under [REDACTED] auspices. These missions were flown along the [REDACTED] 20 NM offshore (consistent with current 303 Committee restraints). Both missions demonstrated the U-2R's capability to collect imagery and electronic intelligence simultaneously.

4. During April 1969, Detachment G operating from Edwards AFB, California, deployed a U-2R to [REDACTED] in a test of the Detachment's capability to move the U-2R in response to crisis situations. [REDACTED] pilots participated in the exercise. The deployment and redeployment flight profiles significantly demonstrated the U-2R's capability to complete long distance unrefueled missions. Both the deployment and redeployment missions were flown without excessive fatigue being noted by the pilot. The one-way distance amounted to 4885 NM and was traveled during the deployment flight in 12 hours and 20 minutes and during the redeployment flight in 13 hours and five minutes.

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5. As of 31 March 1969, the six Agency U-2R aircraft have flown 445 sorties amounting to 1455 flying hours without loss of an aircraft or serious damage. This is in contrast to a significantly higher loss rate experienced previously in the older U-2C/G model aircraft during its initial entry into the operational inventory. The learning curve in U-2 operations has been a significant factor in the improved U-2R accident ratio, however, the U-2R aircraft is a much improved and easier to operate aircraft.

6. Plans are in process to qualify the U-2R for U.S. Navy carrier operations during November and December 1969. This will enable the Agency to operate world-wide with the U-2R with or without prepared land base facilities.

(Signed)
For

CARL E. DUCKETT
Deputy Director
for
Science and Technology

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Attachment:
As stated

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